DRAFTED
ONE HUNDRED DAYS
MARK
POWERS
CARAVAN
STUDIO
CHRIS LIE
JUNE 2009
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DDP

ONE WORLD. ONE PEOPLE. ONE PURPOSE.

DRAFTED

ONE HUNDRED DAYS

PREVIOUSLY IN DRAFTED...

More than a year has passed since the human race was drafted to serve in an interstellar war. Billions of men, women, and children were trained by an enigmatic alien species to become soldiers.

A great many of them perished repelling the worm-like enemy's first assault on Earth.

Now, the survivors are left to sift through the rubble of once-great cities and closely held dreams. In this new world, the task of rebuilding and girding for future conflicts falls equally upon all, regardless of who and what they once were…

WRITER **MARK POWERS**

ARTISTS **CHRIS LIE** (breakdowns), **JUNAIDI & FAISAL** (pencils)

COLORISTS **JOTTER PRODUCTION** of **CARAVAN STUDIO**

LETTERER **CRANK!** EDITOR **JAMES LOWDER**

PRODUCER **SAM WELLS** LOGO DESIGNER **SEAN K. DOVE**

COVER ARTISTS **CHRIS LIE, LIUS LASAHIDO**

and **CRUT** of **CARAVAN STUDIO**

CO-CREATORS **MARK POWERS** and **JOSH BLAYLOCK**

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DAY ONE - OVER EASTERN ILLINOIS
NO ONE SAYS A WORD.

NO ONE HAS TO.
MOST OF US HAVE BEEN THROUGH THIS BEFORE; IN THE MONTHS SINCE THE BATTLE.

SENT TO BEGIN REBUILDING CITIES WHERE PEOPLE USED TO GO FOR VACATIONS AND BUSINESS TRIPS AND FAMILY REUNIONS.
I ALWAYS THINK I'M READY FOR IT--

--AND I'M ALWAYS WRONG.

ALL UNITS PREPARE FOR SHELTER ASSEMBLY AND EQUIPMENT STORAGE!
MOVE!
THEY ORDER US AROUND LIKE WE'RE THE ROBOTS-- AND WE LISTEN.
AFTER ALL THAT'S HAPPENED, WE'RE DESPERATE TO LISTEN TO SOMEONE.

THANK YOU, UH...
I'M SORRY, WHAT'S YOUR NAME...? YOU LOOK SO FAMILIAR...
BUT MAYBE THAT'S NO DIFFERENT THAN IT EVER WAS. MAYBE IT'S A NEED THAT'S HARD-WIRED INTO US.

I'M CHERYL.
IS SOMETHING WRONG...?
WHY ELSE WOULD I BE FOLLOWING THIS GUY AROUND?

YOU MIGHT SAY THAT-- HE CAN'T TALK. HE WAS INJURED FIGHTING THE WORMS.
WE SERVED IN THE SAME UNIT. I'M NEIL--

--HE'S BARACK OBAMA.

NOW I KNOW WHERE I'VE SEEN YOU. YOU'RE-- YOU USED TO BE A SENATOR, RIGHT?
IS IT TRUE YOU'RE MUSLIM?
SEE; I WOULD HAVE WANTED TO SMACK THIS LADY FOR SAYING SOMETHING SO IDIOTIC.
MAYBE HE DOES, TOO. INSTEAD, HE PUTS HER AT EASE.
OH, MY... FORGIVE ME.
IN TIMES LIKE THESE, THE MIND TENDS TO SPIT OUT ANY THOUGHTS LEFT OVER FROM OUR OLD LIVES.
EVEN IF THEY'RE FROM BILL O'REILLY PROGRAMS.
C'MON, GUYS. SOONER WE GET OUR ORDERS, THE SOONER WE CAN GET OUT OF THE COLD FOR A WHILE.
THE TASK BEFORE US IS DAUNTING.
NOT ONLY MUST WE REBUILD THIS CITY; WE MUST MAKE IT MORE RESISTANT TO FUTURE CONFLICTS WITH THE ENEMY.
INITIAL SURVEY AND STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENTS BEGIN TOMORROW--
WHAT ABOUT THE WORMS?!

HE'S RIGHT! HOW DO WE KNOW IT'S SAFE--?
I HEARD NOT ALL OF THEM WERE KILLED--
--SOME STILL UNDERGROUND WAITING TO ATTACK--
--RUMORS OF ONE SPOTTED IN FRANCE--
CALM YOURSELVES. SATELLITE IMAGING HAS REVEALED NO WORM PRESENCE WITHIN A FIVE-HUNDRED-MILE RADIUS.
THE GREATEST DANGER AMID THE RUINS WILL BE YOUR OWN FEAR AND BECOMING... SEPARATED FROM THE GROUP.
IF THAT OCCURS, REST ASSURED THAT THE BIO-TRACERS IMPLANTED IN YOUR WRISTS WILL ENABLE US TO LOCATE YOU.
ANY DAMAGE TO, OR TAMPERING WITH THESE IMPLANTS WILL TRANSMIT A HOMING BEACON TO AN ORBITING SECURITY FORCE.
IN OTHER WORDS, DON'T TRY AND DESERT.
WE HAVE ONLY SEVERAL HOURS OF DAYLIGHT REMAINING, AND MUCH WORK TO COMPLETE.
LET US BEGIN.

LATER...
I KNOW WHAT HE'S THINKING.
"THIS IS NOT WHAT MY LIFE IS SUPPOSED TO BE."
EVEN AFTER EVERYTHING WE'VE SEEN, IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THIS IS REAL.
IT MUST BE ESPECIALLY HARD FOR HIM, COMING HERE. SEEING CHICAGO LIKE THIS...
I MEAN, IT'S HARD FOR EVERYONE-- BUT THIS USED TO BE HIS HOME.
IT'S WHERE HE MET HIS WIFE, WHERE HIS CHILDREN WERE BORN.
WHERE HE MAYBE FIRST REALIZED WHAT HE WANTED TO DO WITH HIS LIFE...
NOW, ALL THOSE HOPES AND DREAMS ARE GONE.
LIKE THEY ARE FOR ALL OF US.
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT. NEWS IS PROBABLY ON NOW...

BARACK!
BAR', WE NEED YOUR OPINION ON SOMETHING WHEN YOU GET THE CHANCE--
'SUP, SENATOR?
MISSED YOU AT DINNER, O-MAN.
IF THERE'S ANYTHING GOOD ABOUT THE DRAFT, IT'S THAT EVERYONE ON EARTH WAS MADE EQUAL IN ONE FELL SWOOP.

SO IT BOTHERS ME, SOMETIMES, HOW WE RESPOND TO HIM. HOW I RESPOND TO HIM.

DO I BELIEVE IN HIM BECAUSE HE'S STRONG... OR BECAUSE I'M WEAK?

SO, UM... YOU'RE MARRIED?
I CAN TELL BECAUSE... WELL, I AM, TOO.
PLEASE, SIT.
YOU CAN *TALK*? I THOUGHT...
JUST A BIT. THEY SAY IT'LL TAKE MONTHS TO FULLY HEAL.
WHAT'S YOUR HUSBAND'S NAME?
WELL, FIRST THINGS FIRST. I'M A *NURSE*-- AT LEAST, I WAS.
SO I KNOW WOUNDS LIKE YOURS HEAL FASTER IF THE PATIENT DOESN'T TALK.
THAT'S BETTER.
MY HUSBAND'S NAME IS ADAM... HIS UNIT'S IN MEXICO RIGHT NOW.
DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN...?
TWO? SO DO WE.
GUYS, CHECK IT OUT!

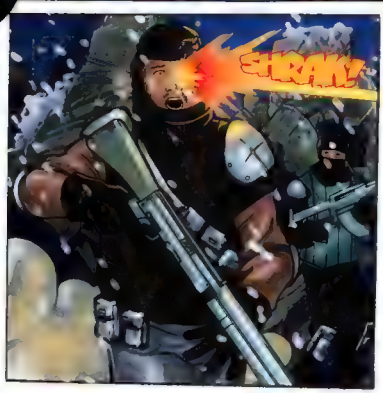
--WAR HERO GABRIEL CONTRERAS APPEARED TODAY AT THE UNVEILING OF THE WORLD'S FIRST MONUMENT TO THOSE WHO DIED IN THE BATTLE WITH THE WORMS.
CONTRERAS DECLINED TO BE INTERVIEWED, SAYING ONLY, "I'M HERE TO REMEMBER MY FRIEND, PRESTON WALKER, AND ALL ZZZZZT WHO LOST THEIR LIVEZZZZT."
OH, COME ON! FREAKIN' WEATHER INTERFERENCE--
AH, WHO CARES? THEY'RE MAKING THAT KID OUT TO BE A CROSS BETWEEN LUKE SKYWALKER AND EISENHOWER--
THIS PROBABLY MEANS THE NET'S DOWN, TOO--
THE ALIENS HELPED RE-ESTABLISH SOME LIMITED BROADCAST CAPABILITIES A FEW WEEKS AGO.
THEY EVEN BEGAN ISSUING LAPTOPS, SO THAT PEOPLE COULD COMMUNICATE WITH FAMILY MEMBERS SERVING IN OTHER UNITS.
FOR THOSE FEW MINUTES A DAY, THE WORLD ALMOST FEELS SANE.
NEEDLESS TO SAY, WHEN THE SYSTEM CRASHES, SO DOES MORALE.
EVEN FOR THE STRONG ONES.

RRRR

RRRRRRUHMMBLE
WHAT--?
OH, NO... GOD, NO!
A WORM! IT'S A WORM!
WHAT THE HELL DO WE DO--?
PRAY, JACKASS. OUR WEAPONS CACHE IS MINIMAL, AND I'VE SEEN ONE OF THOSE MONSTERS TAKE OUT TWICE THE NUMBER OF SECURITY DROIDS WE'VE GOT HERE.
RRRRRRUHMMBLE
REMAIN CALM, PLEASE! REMEMBER YOUR TRAINING--
THE SHIPS ARE ALREADY GONE! WE NEED TO RUN!
THE TRANSPORTS! WHERE ARE THEY--?
LET THE DROIDS FIGHT THEM--
WEAPONS FAST!
VRRRROOM!
WHAT WAS THAT?

VRRRRROOM!
YAAAAHHHH
WHAT THE--?
VRRRRROOM!

DROIDS FIRST! TAKE OUT THE DROIDS FIRST!
MAKE THESE SHEEP DEFENSE-LESS--


SHRAK!

WH-WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE...?
SCAVENGERS. BLACK MARKETEERS. CALL 'EM WHAT YOU WANT-- BUT THERE ARE PLENTY MORE WHERE HE CAME FROM!

ANY IDEAS?
CHOOOM
CHOOOM
WHAT'S THAT GESTURE SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
"FORM A PERIMETER"? OH, SURE. NO PROBLEM.

IT'S PURE CHAOS DOWN THERE-- THE WORM SETUP WORKED TO PERFECTION, MR. SALT.
MMM.
THIS IS TAKING TOO LONG.
WE NEED TO GET WHAT WE CAME FOR.

KOOOM!
KOOOM!
FALL BACK! FALL BACK TOWARDS THE SHEDS AND FORM A PERIMETER!
WHAT AM I SAYING? HALF THESE PEOPLE HAVE NEVER SEEN COMBAT-- THEY'RE JUST ALL THAT'S LEFT.
THEY HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
DAMN IT! THEY'VE ALREADY GOTTEN INTO OUR SUPPLIES!
WHATDOIDOWHATDOIDO--?
SPAK! SPAK! SPAK!
H-HUMAN...
LISTEN. ZZZT... TO ME.
WHAT THE...?
PFFFT.
NICE TRY--
HUMP!

BLAM!
--HE--HE JUST SHOT ONE OF HIS OWN MEN!

HEY! HEY, STOP! STOP, OR I'LL...
I'LL...

SHOOT.
I CAN'T DO IT.
I MUST HAVE SEEN THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE DIE FIGHTING THE WORMS--

--HOUSEWIVES AND CABBIES AND STOCKBROKERS FORCED TO BECOME SOLDIERS, TORN LIMB FROM LIMB, BURNED ALIVE.
BUT AT LEAST WE WEREN'T KILLING EACH OTHER.

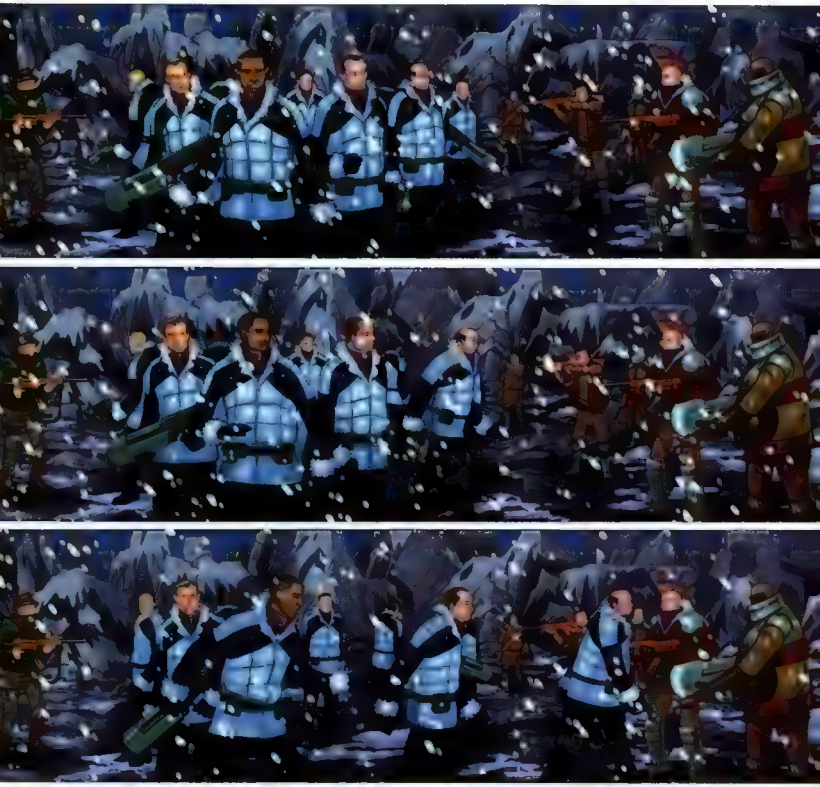
RRRRRRRRRR!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!

LISTEN TO ME! MY NAME IS SALT!
WE ARE LEAVING.
BUT BEFORE WE DO, I WANT TO APPEAL TO THE MORE INTELLIGENT AMONG YOU.

WHAT EXACTLY IS THE POINT OF REBUILDING CHICAGO? OR ANY CITY; FOR THAT MATTER?
IT'S LUDICROUS. NOTHING IS EVER GOING TO BE THE WAY IT USED TO BE.

ALL WE HAVE LEFT ARE OUR SELVES. OUR INDIVIDUAL WITS, AND GUTS, AND STRENGTH.
BUT THEY'RE MAKING YOU INTO DRONES!

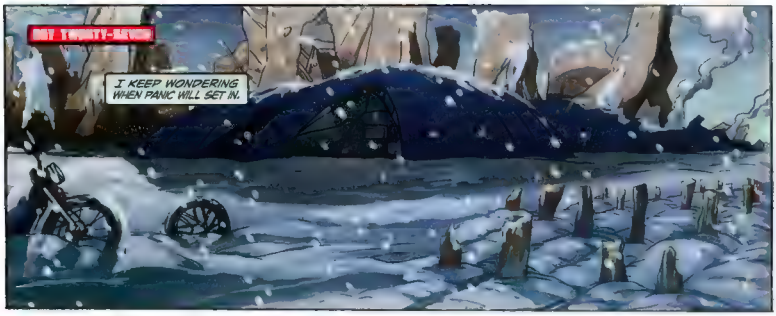
MY PEOPLE, AT LEAST, DON'T HAVE THEIR LIVES DICTATED TO THEM BY ALIENS AND MACHINES.
WITH US, YOU CAN TAKE WHAT YOU WANT, WHEN YOU WANT-- AND THE ONLY WEIGHT YOU NEED TO PULL IS YOUR OWN.
IF THAT SOUNDS LIKE A BETTER LIFE-- A FAIRER LIFE-- COME WITH US.

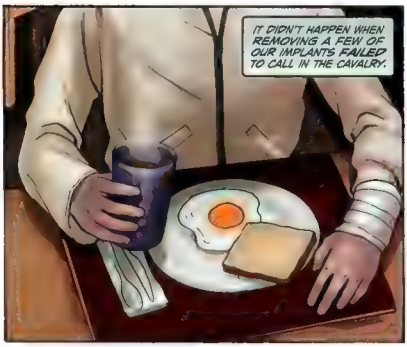


WHAT ARE YOU--?
THE *IMPLANTS*. HE'S TRYING TO WARN YOU ABOUT THE IMPLANTS.

PLEASE.
EVEN IF THEIR SIGNAL *COULD* PENETRATE THIS WEATHER, WE FIGURED A WAY AROUND THEM ***WEEK'S*** AGO.

WE KNOW EVERY INCH OF THE RUINS, AND YOU'VE NO DROIDS LEFT TO PROTECT YOU.
SO UNLESS YOU'RE LOOKING TO SWITCH SIDES, I WOULDN'T RECOMMEND FOLLOWING US.
VRRRRRMMMM
O-OBAMA.
SSNFS
THEY GOT A LOT OF OUR SUPPLIES. FOOD, WEAPONS... THERE'S NOT MUCH LEFT. AND... OUR COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT'S BEEN TRASHED.
WHAT NOW...?


DAY TWENTY-SEVEN
I KEEP WONDERING WHEN PANIC WILL SET IN.


IT DIDN'T HAPPEN WHEN REMOVING A FEW OF OUR IMPLANTS FAILED TO CALL IN THE CAVALRY.

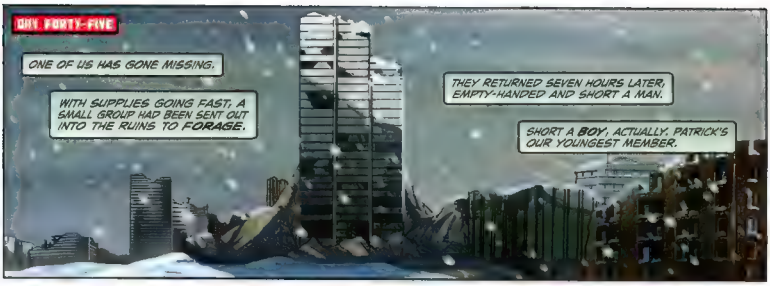
IT DIDN'T HAPPEN WHEN WE LOST ONE OF ONLY TWO FUNCTIONING GENERATORS.

FOR THE MOMENT, WE SEEM TO HAVE GRABBED HOLD OF A LIVING, BREATHING LIFE PRESERVER.
THE PROBLEM WITH LIFE PRESERVERS, THOUGH--

WHEN YOU'RE READY.
--IS THEY CAN ONLY KEEP YOU AFLOAT FOR SO LONG.

OKAY, HERE WE GO...
*GOOD MORNING EVERYONE.
*FIRST, WE SHOULD ALL THANK CHERYL, WHO'S BEEN WORKING TIRELESSLY TO ENSURE OUR WOUNDED HEAL QUICKLY.
*NOT AN EASY TASK, GIVEN OUR, UH, DEARTH OF SUPPLIES.
*WE SHOULD ALL FOLLOW HER LEAD AND OFFER UP THE SKILLS OF OUR OLD LIVES.
*JUST BECAUSE YOU WEREN'T A NURSE LIKE CHERYL DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE NOTHING RELEVANT TO CONTRIBUTE.
*BY WAY OF EXAMPLE, DUE TO HIS PAST EXPERIENCE AS AN INVENTORY MANAGER, I'M PLACING MR. BAIN IN CHARGE OF OUR SUPPLIES.
*SO DON'T BE SHY. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST IS ANYONE WHO HAS ANY SORT OF MECHANICAL KNOWLEDGE, TO WORK ON THE COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT.
ALSO, ANYONE WHO'S GOT EXPERIENCE... HUNTING.
UH... THAT'S IT.
FIDX

SOON...
IS IT JUST ME, OR IS WHAT THEY'RE DOING *USELESS*?
I MEAN, WHAT DOES HE THINK WE'RE GOING TO *ACCOMPLISH* BY MOVING AROUND GARBAGE?
LESS COVER FOR THOSE SCAVENGERS OUT THERE; FOR *ONE* THING.
MAYBE JUST AS IMPORTANT, IT KEEPS US FOCUSED ON COMMON GOALS.
COMMON GOALS...
MY GOAL IS TO STAY ALIVE.
YEAH, I'M SURE YOU'D DO GREAT WITH *THAT* ON YOUR OWN.
WHAT WERE YOU *BEFORE* THE DRAFT, EVANS? A STOCKBROKER? LAWYER?
YOU *OBVIOUSLY* AREN'T THE TYPE WHO LIKES GETTING HIS HANDS DIRTY--
LISTEN, YOU NAIVE LITTLE SHIT.
HE'S GOT YOU CONVINCED THAT IF WE JUST HOLD OUT *LONG* ENOUGH, THE ALIENS WILL EVENTUALLY SEND HELP-- BUT TAKE A LOOK *AROUND*.
ALL THOSE AERIAL WEAPONS THEY DETONATED DURING THE WAR FUCKED WITH THE WEATHER, AND WINTER'S JUST *STARTING*.
YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING, "IT'S CHICAGO, OF *COURSE* THEY'LL COME."
BUT KID... IT'S *NOT* CHICAGO ANYMORE. IT'S NO DIFFERENT FROM THE HUNDREDS OF *OTHER* CITIES AND TOWNS THAT GOT LEVELED.
THE A...ENS ARE LICKING THEIR *OWN* WOUNDS, TOO. IT COULD BE MONTHS BEFORE THEY EVEN *REMEMBER* WE'RE HERE.
UNLESS WE DO SOMETHING *DRASTIC*, THEY'RE GOING TO FIND A BUNCH OF FROZEN CORPSES.
IF THEY FIND US AT *ALL*.


DAY FORTY-FIVE
ONE OF US HAS GONE MISSING.
WITH SUPPLIES GOING FAST, A SMALL GROUP HAD BEEN SENT OUT INTO THE RUINS TO FORAGE.
THEY RETURNED SEVEN HOURS LATER, EMPTY-HANDED AND SHORT A MAN.
SHORT A BOY. ACTUALLY, PATRICK'S OUR YOUNGEST MEMBER.

IF WE DON'T FIND HIM BEFORE THE SUN GOES DOWN, HE'LL DIE OF EXPOSURE.

GIVE IT UP, KID!
YOU KNOW WE CAN'T LET YOU TAKE WHAT'S OURS!
DAMN. SCAVENGERS.

YOU CAN STILL GET OUT OF THIS ALIVE, JUST COME OUT!
WE FOLLOW THEIR TAUNTS AND CURSES THROUGH THE RUINS, SOMEHOW MANAGING TO NOT REVEAL OUR POSITION.

OF COURSE, THEIR ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ELSEWHERE.
LOOK, YOU'RE STARTING TO REALLY PISS US OFF--

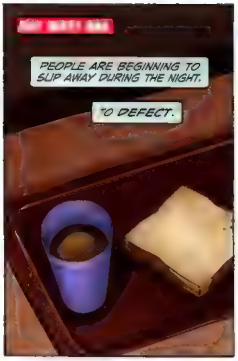
WHAT A COINCIDENCE--
OOOM
OOOM
OOOM

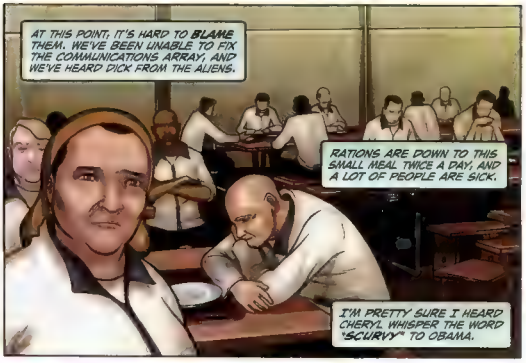
--WE WERE ABOUT TO SAY THE SAME THING.
SRRRRK!
OOOM
OOOM

PATRICK! PATRICK, CAN YOU HEAR US?
H-H-HERE. D-DOWN H-HERE... S-SO C-COLD..

'S OKAY... G-GOT IT... WOULDN'T L-LET THEM H-HAVE IT...
S-SAFE... KEPT IT SAFE...
WE HAD THE FORESIGHT TO BRING A ROPE, KNOWING HE MIGHT HAVE FALLEN. STILL, IT TAKES A GOOD TEN MINUTES TO HAUL HIM OUT.

F-FOUND FOOD, SENATOR... L-LIKE YOU ASKED...
TH-THIS'LL HELP... RIGHT?


PEOPLE ARE BEGINNING TO SLIP AWAY DURING THE NIGHT.
TO DEFECT.


AT THIS POINT, IT'S HARD TO BLAME THEM. WE'VE BEEN UNABLE TO FIX THE COMMUNICATIONS ARRAY, AND WE'VE HEARD DICK FROM THE ALIENS.
RATIONS ARE DOWN TO THIS SMALL MEAL TWICE A DAY, AND A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE SICK.
I'M PRETTY SURE I HEARD CHERYL WHISPER THE WORD "SCURVY" TO OBAMA.

GET YOUR HANDS OFF!
BUT YOU SAID--
THE ALIENS AREN'T COMING.

WHAT AM I, SANTA CLAUS? KEEP AWAY FROM MY FOOD--
SELFISH BASTARD!
NO ONE'S COMING, EXCEPT MAYBE THOSE SCAVENGERS.

HE'S A THIEF, O-MAN! TRIED TO STEAL MY RATIONS--
I THOUGHT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO SHARE--
AND IT'S PRETTY CLEAR WE'D RATHER FIGHT EACH OTHER THAN THEM.

I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.
ALONE

LOOK, I... I DON'T KNOW HOW ELSE TO SAY THIS, BUT YOU'RE LOSING THEM.
SOMETHING'S GOTTA CHANGE.

ONLY SO MUCH I CAN CHANGE. NEIL. I DIDN'T CREATE THIS SITUATION.
WHAT'S YOUR SUGGESTION?

THERE'S... THERE'S BEEN TALK.
ABOUT MAYBE GOING AFTER THE SCAVENGERS. RAIDING THEM, LIKE THEY DID US.

NO. ABSOLUTELY NOT.
SO WE SHOULD JUST SIT AROUND WAITING TO STARVE OR FREEZE TO DEATH?
HUNTING AND FORAGING HAVE BEEN A COMPLETE WASTE. WE NEED TO TRY SOMETHING--

LIKE ATTACKING A GROUP OF SCARED, HUNGRY PEOPLE? WHOSE CRIMES WERE COMMITTED OUT OF DESPERATION?
A GROUP THAT NOW INCLUDES A NUMBER OF OUR UNITMATES?
THIS ISN'T JUST ABOUT KEEPING US ALIVE LONG ENOUGH FOR HELP TO COME-- IT'S ABOUT KEEPING THEM ALIVE, TOO.
A RAID WOULD BE SUICIDE FOR BOTH SIDES.

I OPEN MY MOUTH, BUT NOTHING COMES OUT.
FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FIND MYSELF WONDERING IF HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING.
IF HE'S NOT GOING TO CHANGE TACTICS, MAYBE SOMEONE ELSE NEEDS TO.

DAY EIGHTY-EIGHT
WE SHOULD KILL HIM.
DAMN STRAIGHT.
I SAY WE CUT HIS BALLS OFF AND SEND THEM BACK TO HIS FRIENDS.
SOUNDS LIKE A START--
L-LOOK. YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND... I HAD NO CHOICE...
HAD NO CHOICE? HAD NO CHOICE?
BECAUSE YOU CHOSE TO STEAL FROM US, I SACRIFICED MY FINGERS FOR A GODDAMN CAN OF CARROTS!
ALL THIS TIME. ALL THIS TIME YOU'VE BEEN SMUGGLING OUR SUPPLIES OUT TO YOUR SCAVENGER PALS!
P-PLEASE--
BACK OFF, MAN!
HE'S ONE OF THEM! WHY WOULD YOU PROTECT HIM?
YOU KNOW WHY, PATRICK.
EVERYONE HERE REFUSED THE CHANCE TO JOIN GALT-- PRESUMABLY BECAUSE WE BELIEVED DOING SO WOULD COMPROMISE WHATEVER IT IS THAT SEPARATES US FROM ANIMALS.
CROSSING THAT LINE NOW WOULD MEAN IT NEVER REALLY EXISTED AT ALL.
AND IF THAT'S TRUE, MAYBE WE DESERVE TO STARVE.

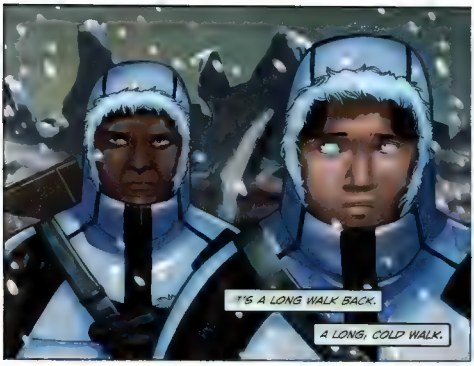
IF IT HAD BEEN ANYONE OTHER THAN CHERYL SHIELDING HIM, THE KID WOULD HAVE SHOT BAIN.
IT STILL MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED IF SOMEONE HADN'T CHOSEN THAT PARTICULAR MOMENT TO CALL AGAIN FOR A RAID.

IN THAT ATMOSPHERE, THERE WAS NO WAY OBAMA COULD QUELL THEIR ANGER.
HE INSISTED ON COMING ALONG, THOUGH-- WOULDN'T LET US "FACE THE DANGER ALONE."

A FEW WEEKS AGO, A RAID MIGHT'VE STOOD A SNOWBALL'S CHANCE IN HELL OF WORKING.
NOW, IT'S A CASE OF TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE.
SO I HAD MY OWN LITTLE TALK WITH BAIN...

G-GUYS... I-IT'S B-BEEN HOURS, AND WE'VE FOUND SQUAT.
MAYBE WE SHOULD G-GO BACK.
HE'S RIGHT... MAYBE THEY CLEARED OUT WHEN BAIN DIDN'T CHECK IN, OR SOMETHING.

YEAH. I AGREE.
TOMORROW'S ANOTHER DAY.
MY GUT'S CHURNING. I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M REALLY DOING THIS.


IT'S A LONG WALK BACK.
A LONG, COLD WALK.

BUT I'VE GOT MY THOUGHTS TO KEEP ME WARM.
MY GUILT.

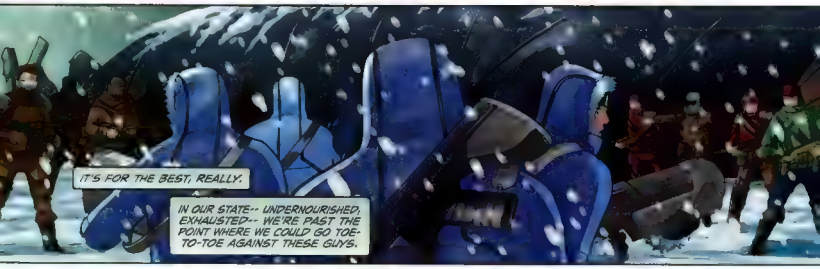
BUT WOULD WE EVEN BE IN THIS SITUATION IF HE'D MADE BETTER DECISIONS?
HE'S THE ONE WHO PUT BAIN IN CHARGE OF OUR SUPPLIES.

WHY SHOULD I FEEL I OWE HIM SOMETHING?

THANK GOD, WE'RE BACK.
THIS WAS A COMPLETE WASTE OF TIME--

NO, NOT A COMPLETE WASTE.

DROP YOUR WEAPONS, YOU'RE SURROUNDED! NOW!
THEY'RE ON US BEFORE WE CAN EVEN THINK ABOUT FIGHTING.


IT'S FOR THE BEST, REALLY.
IN OUR STATE-- UNDERNOURISHED, EXHAUSTED-- WE'RE PAST THE POINT WHERE WE COULD GO TOE-TO-TOE AGAINST THESE GUYS.

EVANS, YOU TRAITOR!
HOW CAN YOU DO THIS?
DROP THE RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION ACT.

YOU'VE DONE THE WHOLE MUTUAL SACRIFICE THING FOR MONTHS NOW.
AND WHERE DID IT GET YOU?

YOU'RE DYING A SLOW, COLD DEATH.
EVANS JUST MADE THE CHOICE YOU WERE TOO AFRAID TO MAKE.

GROW UP. WE'RE NOT THE BAD GUYS HERE.
WE JUST HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AMERICAN.

YOU HEARD ME. AMERICAN.
WHEN'S THE LAST TIME ANYONE REMINDED YOU OF THAT?

THIS CAMP IS OURS NOW. WE'LL USE WHAT'S LEFT, TAKE WHAT WE CAN, THEN MOVE ON.
SO LONG AS YOU CAN KEEP UP, YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN US.
WE DON'T TOLERATE PARASITES.

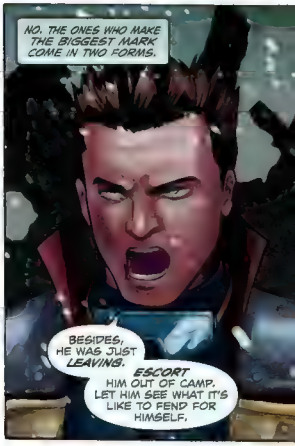
OH, COME ON...! WHAT IS IT WITH YOU PEOPLE?

THE GUY CAN BARELY SPEAK, AND STILL HE'S GOT YOU IN HIS THRALL!
THINK FOR YOURSELVES. HE'S NOT A SENATOR ANYMORE-- YOU AND I ARE ALL THAT'S LEFT OF THIS COUNTRY.
YEAH, I KNOW WHO YOU ARE... WHO YOU WERE.
YOU'VE GOT THESE PEOPLE BELIEVING THE RULES OF THE OLD WORLD STILL MATTER.
LOOKING AROUND, MAYBE ALL YOU CAN SEE IS WHAT WAS LOST.
ME? I SEE A FRONTIER.
I SEE OPPORTUNITY.
KRAKK

YOU JUST MADE A *BIG* MISTAKE, MAN--
STOP!
ALL THIS TIME, I'VE BEEN ASKING MYSELF WHAT SEPARATES LEADERS FROM FOLLOWERS.

IS IT CHARISMA?
LOWER YOUR WEAPONS, GENTLEMEN.
LET'S NOT MAKE HIM A MARTYR. YOU DON'T SEE ANY OF HIS MEN DEFENDING HIM. ALL HE'S DONE IS PROVE HOW *IMPOTENT* HE IS.

PRAGMATISM? A WILLINGNESS TO ACT WHEN OTHERS WON'T?
THEY MAY NOT FIND ME VERY LIKABLE, BUT THEY CAN SEE MY APPROACH OFFERS A LOT MORE IN THE WAY OF *REWARD* THAN HIS.


NO. THE ONES WHO MAKE THE BIGGEST *MARK* COME IN TWO FORMS.
BESIDES, HE WAS JUST *LEAVING.*
ESCORT HIM OUT OF CAMP. LET HIM SEE WHAT IT'S LIKE TO FEND FOR HIMSELF.

OH, AND SENATOR...?
THOSE WHO DEMAND YOUR BEST--

--AND THOSE WHO INDULGE YOUR WORST.
THANK *NEIL* HERE FOR HAVING THE BALLS YOU LACK.
HIS HELP WAS ESSENTIAL IN MAKING SURE THIS MEETING OF THE MINDS WOULD HAPPEN.

I WANT TO SAY I'M SORRY.
TO EXPLAIN THAT I WAS ONLY TRYING TO SAVE LIVES.
THAT JOINING THEM WAS THE ONLY WAY TO AVOID STARVATION.

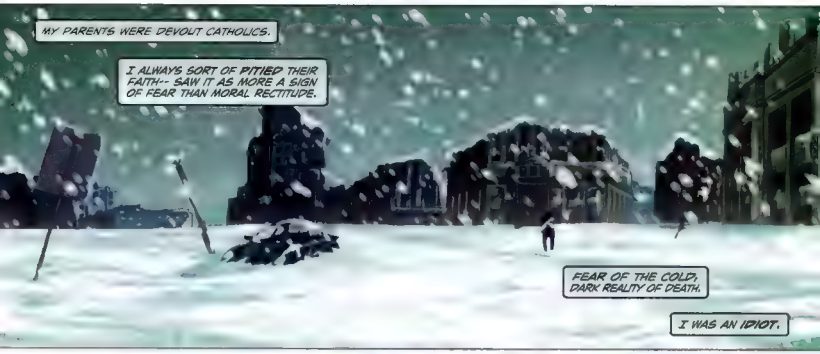
THE RATIONALIZATIONS DIE IN MY THROAT.

I DID IT BECAUSE I WAS HUNGRY. AND TIRED. AND AFRAID.

WHAT DID HE SAY TO YOU GUYS?

HM?
WHEN WE FIRST SURROUNDED YOU, HE WHISPERED SOMETHING. WHAT DID HE SAY?

"LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY. DON'T LOSE FAITH NOW."


MY PARENTS WERE DEVOUT CATHOLICS.
I ALWAYS SORT OF PITIED THEIR FAITH-- SAW IT AS MORE A SIGN OF FEAR THAN MORAL RECTITUDE.
FEAR OF THE COLD, DARK REALITY OF DEATH.
I WAS AN IDIOT.

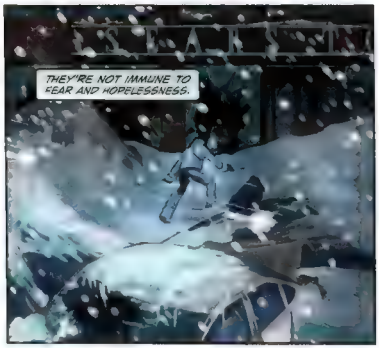
IT'S LIKE CHERYL SAID-- WE'RE NOT ANIMALS. THEY FOLLOW OUT OF INSTINCT, NOT FAITH.
WE NEED TO BELIEVE IN SOMETHING-- A PERSON, THE FUTURE, A VISION OF PERFECTION.

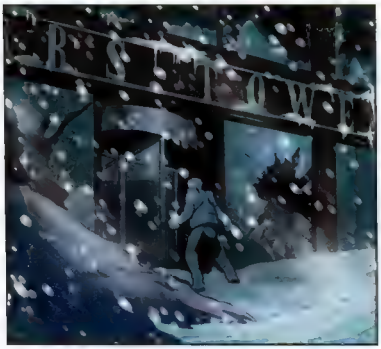
AND THE DARKER THE TIMES, THE MORE FERVENT THAT NEED IS.

I INVESTED ALL MY FAITH IN OBAMA-- AND WHEN HE COULDN'T MAKE THINGS THE WAY I WANTED THEM TO BE, I FELT BETRAYED.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE EQUATION?
WHAT ABOUT LEADERS THEMSELVES?
SHHH!
WHAT STRANGE MIX OF EGO AND RESPONSIBILITY WOULD CAUSE SOMEONE TO FORSO A QUIET, NORMAL LIFE--
--IN FAVOR OF ONE IN WHICH HIS OR HER EVERY WORD AND ACTION IMPACTS THE LIVES OF COUNTLESS OTHERS?
IT RARELY ENDS WELL.
WHERE DO THEY FIND INSPIRATION?

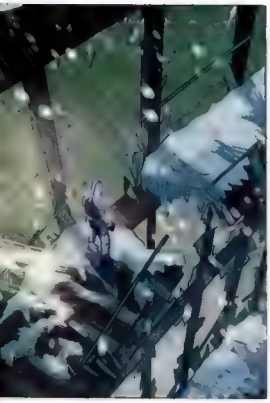
THEY'RE HUMAN.


THEY'RE NOT IMMUNE TO FEAR AND HOPELESSNESS.

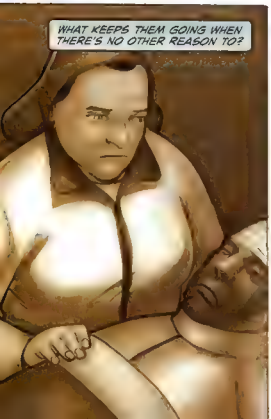


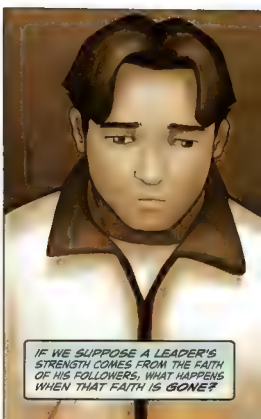
SO SHOULDN'T THEY BE PRONE TO THE SAME NEED AS THE REST OF US?

ENNNGH!

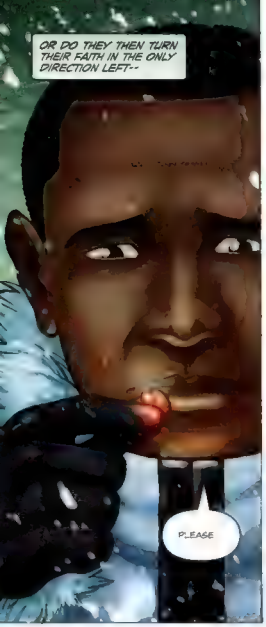


WHILE THEY'RE LEADING US, WHO'S LEADING THEM?


WHAT KEEPS THEM GOING WHEN THERE'S NO OTHER REASON TO?

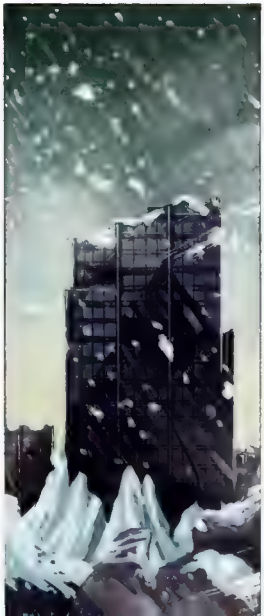

IF WE SUPPOSE A LEADER'S STRENGTH COMES FROM THE FAITH OF HIS FOLLOWERS, WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THAT FAITH IS GONE?

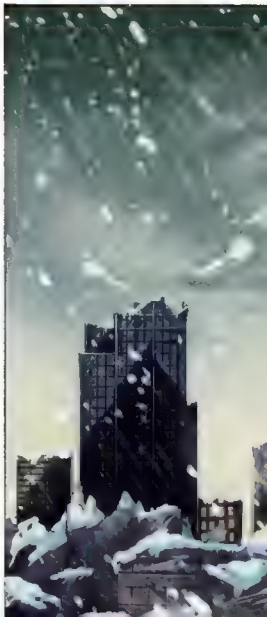
ARE THEY THEN REDUCED TO SOMETHING MORE PRIMITIVE--
THUNK!
--LIKE AN ANIMAL GNAWING OFF ITS OWN LEG TO ESCAPE A TRAP?
NNGAAHH!


OR DO THEY THEN TURN THEIR FAITH IN THE ONLY DIRECTION LEFT--
P_EASE

--TOWARDS A HIGHER POWER?

FASSHHH!





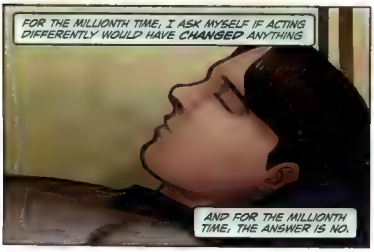
HOPE

HOPE WE'RE NOT TOO LATE--
RAISA, OVER *HERE!* I THINK WE'VE GOT A *LIVE* ONE!
EASY. NOBODY HERE'S GOING TO HURT YOU.
WHAT'S HE *DOING* UP HERE?
PROBABLY TRYING TO SIGNAL *US*.
THIS IS THE HIGHEST POINT FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES AROUND, *GABRIEL*.
IF HE REMOVED HIS IMPLANT UP HERE, THE SIGNAL WOULD STAND A BETTER CHANCE OF PENETRATING THE ATMOSPHERIC INTERFERENCE.
OR HE IS INSANE, EITHER ONE.
MUST BE FROM THAT CONSTRUCTION UNIT THAT WENT OFF-LINE A WHILE BACK.
HE'S TRYING TO SPEAK...

H-HELP B-BASE ATTACKED
ATTACKED? BY WHO?
P PEOPLE G-GROUP OF G-SCAVENGERS WELL-ORGANIZED DESPERATE H-HEAVILY ARMED
H-HOW LARGE IS YOUR E-FORCE ?
LARGE ENOUGH, FRIEND.
LARGE ENOUGH.

DAY ONE HUNDRED
I CAN HEAR WEEPING AND FRANTIC GRUNTS IN THE DARKNESS.

WE KNOW WE'RE GOING TO DIE SOON.
EVEN THE SCAVENGERS MUST KNOW IT.


FOR THE MILLIONTH TIME, I ASK MYSELF IF ACTING DIFFERENTLY WOULD HAVE CHANGED ANYTHING
AND FOR THE MILLIONTH TIME, THE ANSWER IS NO.

WE'D HAVE BEEN SCREWED NO MATTER--

MY GOD.

DROP YOUR WEAPONS!
ON YOUR KNEES, NOW! YOU ONLY GET ONE WARNING!
KRAK!
I PREFER NO WARNING.
I SEE MY SHOT AT REDEMPTION TRYING TO SNEAK OFF INTO THE DARKNESS.
HEY! THAT'S THEIR LEADER, STOP HIM!
NOBODY HEARS ME IN THE CHAOS. IT'S UP TO ME--
ƎNNFƐ
UNGH!

GODDAMN LOWLIFE SONOFA-BITCH...
KRAK!
WE BOTH KNOW WHO YOU'RE *REALLY* MAD AT, KID--
WHAM!
--AND IT'S NOT *ME*.
YOU *MADE* YOUR CHOICE, AND IF YOU CAN'T LIVE WITH IT, YOU CAN DAMN WELL *DIE* WITH IT.
GOOD. A PART OF ME THINKS. *GOOD*.
I SAW A LOT OF HEAD WOUNDS IN THE ER.
IT WAS NEVER THE *BLOOD* THAT GOT ME--
--IT WAS THE BRAIN MATTER.

DROP YOUR WEAPON AND STEP BACK!

"IT'S NOT THE BLOOD, IT'S THE BRAIN MATTER"?
I WAS TRYING TO SOUND TOUGH. YOU'RE ALIVE, AREN'T YOU?

NEIL, IS THAT...? HOW IS IT POSSIBLE?
I... I... DON'T KNOW.

AS HE STUMBLES TOWARDS US, I SEE HIM FOR WHAT HE REALLY IS-- A MAN WHO, IN ALL THE WAYS THAT COUNT, IS NO DIFFERENT THAN ME.
NO STRONGER, NO WEAKER, NO LESS PRONE TO MISTAKES.

THE DYNAMIC BETWEEN A GROUP AND ITS CHOSEN LEADER IS COMPLEX-- EQUAL PARTS EMOTION AND PRACTICALITY.
GO TOO FAR IN EITHER DIRECTION, AND DISASTER FOLLOWS.
BUT IF YOU CAN KEEP THE BALANCE LONG ENOUGH, WITH THE RIGHT GIVE AND TAKE--

--SOMETIMES IT'S ENOUGH TO GET YOU THROUGH THE WORST OF TIMES.

EPILOGUE - DAY ONE HUNDRED AND ONE...
I'M SORRY YOU AND YOUR UNIT WENT THROUGH ALL THIS.

THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER, BUT IT'S STILL PRETTY CHAOTIC OUT THERE.
THERE NEEDS TO BE A LOT OF HEALING, BUT I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TIME FOR THAT...

LOOK, ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO STAY? YOU'VE BEEN GRANTED MEDICAL LEAVE--
THANK YOU, BUT THERE'S TOO MUCH WORK TO BE DONE. JUST KEEP THE SUPPLIES AND REINFORCEMENTS COMING.
YOU GOT IT.

YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, SENATOR.
AND SOON YOUR PEOPLE WILL NEED YOU MORE THAN EVER.
WAR IS COMING... BUT NOT THE ONE YOU THINK.

WHEN THE TIME COMES... CAN I COUNT ON YOU?
I'LL BE READY TO SERVE WHENEVER I'M CALLED.

THE END